

brought her young son to pay his respects. She said that Lawton Chiles had saved her son's life. That boy, and the millions of Florida children growing up healthy and ready, may well be his greatest legacy.

I'd also like to thank him publicly for something else. As Florida explodes and diversifies, he worked so hard to make all his native Floridians—those who were like him—see all the new immigrants as their own, to see those children as a rich resource that would make life more interesting and the future more prosperous.

I thank him for being an early supporter of political and campaign finance reform but in doing it in a way that made sense and didn't raise people's defenses. I don't think he had a sanctimonious bone in his body. He just didn't want everybody to have to spend all their time raising money. He thought it would be better if people talked to one another, face-to-face. He thought it would be better if, on television, people had honest debates and discussions. He didn't go around telling you how much better he was than everybody else because he only took a hundred bucks. And he knew that only one person could have ever made that walk, and then you couldn't just repeat that over and over again. He tried to convince us to relax and think. And he did it in the right way.

Some of you know that, right before he died, I think I had about won a long, intense campaign that I waged to persuade Lawton to become America's Special Envoy to Latin America. He said, "Well, I don't want to spend a lot of time in Washington." I said, "Lawton, it's Latin America, not Washington." [Laughter] I said, "You know, you'll have to breeze through every now and then and give me a report. There's a telephone. There are fax machines. You can do this." And he was really getting interested in it.

And I say that not to make anyone sad, but to say that the reason his life was so rich is that he lived to the last hour of the last day thinking about tomorrow, thinking about other people's interest, thinking about other possibilities still to be developed.

So I thank you, Lawton, for teaching us that public service is not a position, it's a mission; that our job is not to posture, but to produce. I thank you for feeling the pulse

of the people and making their hopes and dreams your own. I thank you for never losing the light in your eyes, the steel in your spine, the love in your heart.

Young Lawton's song was reminiscent of the wonderful lines from Wordsworth, "We can make our lives sublime, and departing, leave behind us footprints on the sands of time." What wonderful wide, deep footprints our friend left for us to walk in.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon in the Russell Senate Caucus Room, Room 325, at the Russell Senate Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Ann W. Richards of Texas, and Governor Chiles' wife, Rhea, granddaughter, Christin Chiles, and grandson, Lawton Chiles IV.

Remarks at the Employment Initiative in Oakton, Virginia

January 28, 1999

Thank you. I would say this is a fairly high energy crowd here today. [Laughter] Thank you for making us all feel so welcome. Thank you, Cheryl Simms. She was nervous as a cat. [Laughter] And I said, "Look, Cheryl, that microphone, it will carry your voice. Just pretend you're talking to a friend or two." And I think she did a fine job, don't you? Let's give her a hand. [Applause]

I'd like to thank Mirian Graddick and Mary Jane McKeever for making us feel so welcome here today. I thank Secretary Herman and Secretary Riley for their wonderful work on the announcements I am about to make. I want to thank my longtime friend Senator Chuck Robb for being a terrific Senator for the State of Virginia and on education issues for all the United States.

And I'd like to recognize two Members of the House of Representatives who are here, who have been very, very active on these issues: Congressman Tim Roemer from Indiana, and Representative Dennis Kucinich from Cleveland, Ohio. Thank you for being here, both of you.

I also want to thank the Vice President for his interest in this. Not very long ago, just a couple of weeks ago, he convened a national meeting with business, education, labor, and government leaders to come up with proposals that will further our efforts

to promote lifelong learning. I want to say one other thing: There is a member of my staff who worked very hard on this who is leaving the White House, but she had a lot to do with this announcement I'm making today. Her name is Cecilia Rouse, and she's going back to be a professor. But I wish she were staying with us. Thank you very much, Cecilia, for what you've done.

I wanted to come here because this is a picture—a picture I hope will be in newspapers all across America tomorrow. I hope this picture will be on some television stations tonight. I want Americans to be able to visualize the kind of continuing lifelong learning opportunities that you have that I want for all Americans.

I want to compliment AT&T, the CWA, the IBEW, and Lucent Technologies. This workers alliance, I was told, since its inception in the mid-eighties has given way over 100,000 people the chance to come through here and get education and training. That is profoundly important. And it's important not just for people who work for AT&T, who are in the communications business.

I recently learned about a man in my home State who was 50 years old, had an eighth grade education, ran a conveyor belt for a company that converted to a new computerized transport system. Since he only had an eighth grade education, he was computerphobic, to say the least, and he was afraid that he would lose his job. Instead, he enrolled in a training program, learned how to use computers, improved his reading and math skills so that he could master complex, technical manuals. And instead of losing his job, he got a raise.

Now, a lot of you have been through more than one training program since you've been employed. I just met a gentleman who said he spent over 300 hours in this program, in alliance programs. And if you think about how almost every form of work today is different from what it was just a few years ago and how rapidly the nature of work is changing, we are going to be challenged to change our whole conception of what education is.

You know, a lot of you came from families like mine. I mean, my grandfather had a grade-school education; my stepfather, who raised me, didn't finish high school; my

mother went to nursing school, never went to college; my father's uncle, who served three terms in the legislature, dropped out of school after the eighth grade to support the family. They all did just fine. Now—and all you have to do is look at the census data; you don't just have to tell family stories—if you look at the census data, high school graduates are likely to get jobs where their incomes drop over time, not go up. People who have the equivalent of at least 2 years of college and can keep on learning for a lifetime are likely to get jobs where their incomes go up and, if they lose their jobs, to find jobs that are as good or better.

So what we have now is a situation in America where the income gap, that we all know widened over the previous 20 years or so, is largely a skills gap and that it applies across all kinds of industries. We have to close that skills gap.

In 1992, when I took office, I said we had two deficits. We had a budget deficit and an investment deficit in our people. Well, thanks to Senator Robb and the Members of the House that are here, we've closed the budget deficit; we've got a surplus. But we still have a deficit in investment in our people. We have got to find a way to create in America, not only world-class public schools and access to college education—and you may have heard me say in the State of the Union Address that, with the tax credits, the Pell grants, and the other things, no one should ever fail to go to college because of the cost, now—but we have to create a situation in America where people can keep on learning for a lifetime, without regard to where they live, what their job is, what their income is.

Why? Well, just a couple of statistics. In manufacturing, 88 percent of the companies—I want to say that again—88 percent of the companies say they're having trouble finding qualified applicants to fill at least one kind of job in their operation. One in five companies says, today, it literally cannot expand its operation, even though the markets are there, because they don't have workers with the right skills.

You heard, I think, the Senator said that there are jobs going begging right here in the DC area. You've got high unemployment

in DC, job vacancies in the communities outside. In America as a whole, there are over a quarter of a million high-tech jobs, computer-related jobs, vacant this day. We may have the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, but we've got a quarter of a million high-wage jobs going vacant this day.

And there are places where the economic recovery hasn't hit, because people can't get the investment or because they don't have the skills to do these jobs.

Now, that's really why I wanted to come here. I want America to work like this place does. I want there to be an American alliance. I want workers who aren't lucky enough to be represented by the CWA or the IBEW to have access to lifetime learning. I want employers who may not have the resources of AT&T or Lucent Technologies to know that there is some way they can work with their employees to give them access to these kind of skills.

And in the State of the Union Address I just barely mentioned this, and so I wanted to come here to tell you the things, the specific things that I intend to propose that are in our budget. First, we need a national campaign to dramatically increase our efforts at basic adult education and family literacy, to help the millions and millions of adults who struggle with basic reading or math.

People that cannot fill out a job application cannot be expected to fill a 21st century job. You know, when Alexis told that old Getty joke—I love that—rise early, work hard, strike oil. It's good; it keeps us humble, reminds you there's a little bit of luck in life. [Laughter] But the oil today is in your noggin, not in the ground. And everybody can strike oil today. But they have to have the means to do it.

This country has been greatly enriched, particularly by our immigrant populations. But I went to a school not very long ago, Senator, in Virginia, and they asked me in advance if there was any way we had time to have consecutive translation of my remarks, first in Spanish and then in Arabic, so the parents of the children at the school would understand the speech I was giving to their kids.

Now, I can tell you in a global economy this is not a bad deal; this is a good deal.

But it is not a good deal when you think about—it's going to be hard enough for us all to understand our different racial and ethnic and cultural and religious traditions and figure out how to get all that together, if we can't even read one another's words or understand each other. And if a certain group of people are locked out of the whole new economy, not because they're not intelligent and not because they don't work like crazy but because they literally can't plug in because their mind doesn't have the connections.

And that is very, very important. So we're going to seek new tax credits for businesses like the two that sponsored the alliance, which provide basic skills to their workers. And we will work to greatly expand the funding for basic adult education and high school completion programs.

You read all these stories about inner cities, where there are all these young single people, unemployed. Nearly all of them dropped out of high school. And it's going to be difficult to get some of them into some of the training programs we want unless we can get them to come back and finish high school, get their GED, and then go forward. And so this is a very, very important thing.

Secondly, I'm going to recommend a large new investment in the worker training system we revolutionized last year. You heard previous speakers mention it. But basically what we did was to take all these Government programs, 40 or 50 of them, collapse them into a single skills grant and one-stop shopping, so that if somebody is eligible right now for Federal help and training, instead of having to go to this program, that program, the other program, they go to one place, get a skills grant, and they can decide how to spend the money, where it is most likely to give them the training that will most likely give them a job.

But the program is underfunded today. It will not cover all the people who need it. So over the next 5 years I've asked for funds sufficient for us to be able to provide appropriate training and reemployment services for all Americans who lose their jobs—all Americans.

Now, next year we will increase the funding for skill grants, high-tech community career centers and rapid response teams by more than \$360 million under our budget.

Third, I want to greatly increase our programs and our commitment to helping disadvantaged young people. We'll nearly double the funding for YouthBuild, an innovative program that gives young people a chance to learn construction skills to build homes for low-income families, on the job. We will double the funding for our GEAR UP program, one of my favorite programs; it's a mentoring and tutoring initiative I mentioned earlier, which involves sending college students out into middle schools to mentor students, to get them to both learn their lessons and stay in school but also to raise their sights and believe no matter how poor their circumstances, they can go on to college and do well. And it's a great program.

We are also going to continue our investments in what we call youth-opportunity areas, to try to go into these areas where there are a lot of kids just walking the streets, and there aren't any jobs, to try to get these kids off the streets—either back in the schools, or into jobs. If we cannot deal with the challenges faced by these young people now, with the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years and the first budget surplus in 30 years and the smallest percentage of the American people on welfare in 29 years, we will never get around to doing this. Now is the time for us to try to bring these young people into the mainstream of American life.

We also are going to try to expand more partnerships. You have proved here that it takes people working together to make something like this go. We have a new initiative called "Right-Track Partnerships," to help schools, businesses, and community organizations work together to reduce teen dropout rates and to help former dropouts come back, building on what we did last year, directed especially toward Hispanic young people, because the dropout there is far higher than for any group in America.

Let me just tell you, though, you all know that we need more than a high school education to do what you guys are doing; so even if you didn't have one once, with all the training programs, you've got to have more. In

1989, 10 years ago this coming fall, I met with all the other Governors and the then-President of the United States, George Bush, to set some national education goals. One of our goals was that we would have an on time high school completion rate of 90 percent. That was one of our goals.

We knew that some people would drop out regardless, you know, that just would happen. In 1989—well, 1998, last year, a wonderful thing happened. For the first time since we've been keeping these statistics, the last 20 or 30 years, the on time African-American high school graduation rate was almost identical to the on time high school graduation rate of white children. It was about—between 83 and 84 percent. That's the good news.

There's two pieces of bad news. Bad news piece number one is it's not 90 percent. And that's 16, 17 percent of the people we have to figure out how to get back to school and how to get education and training. And for Hispanic young people, many of whom have language barriers that cause them after the eighth grade not to be able to keep up, the dropout rate is still over 40 percent. So we must do more here.

And it's something I'd like to ask you all to think about. And here in Virginia, Northern Virginia, you've got a lot of young people from all over the world, as the school districts get increasingly diverse—these kids have fine minds, but it will be harder for them, and the longer they go on in school without a complete mastery of English and access to learning, the more the difficult courses will become more out of reach. And if they get bored, they'll drop out eventually. So I ask for your help and attention.

Finally, let me say that I'm very gratified by the broadbased support that this initiative seems to have attracted among the American people. I think it's because everybody knows that what you're doing is what we all need to do for the future. But I would ask you to remember this day, to talk to your friends and neighbors who you may never have mentioned this to, to find out whether all the people that work in their workplaces have access to these sort of training programs.

But remember, what we're trying to do in this balanced budget now is we've closed the

budget deficit, now we've got to close the skills deficit. We cannot have the earnings gap in America, the income gap bigger because we didn't make the skills gap smaller. Now is the time to do it. We will never have a better time. And we will all—all—be richly rewarded when we have more stories like the ones I heard here from the Alliance today.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the Atrium at the AT&T Facility. In his remarks, he referred to Cheryl E. Simms, worker, who introduced the President, Mirian M. Graddick, senior vice president of human resources, and Mary Jane McKeever, president, government markets, AT&T. The President also referred to the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW).

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

January 28, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1 to November 30, 1998. The previous submission covered events during August and September 1998.

Following United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan's September 30 announcement of an initiative to reduce tensions and promote progress towards a just and lasting settlement, the United Nations launched shuttle talks between both communities in October. During the reporting period, U.S. officials urged the leaders of both Cypriot communities to support fully the U.N. initiative. They also underscored my Administration's commitment to finding a peaceful solution to the Cyprus dispute based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks Honoring the 1998 Stanley Cup Champion Detroit Red Wings

January 28, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated, everyone.

Commissioner Bettman, Coach Bowman, Denise Ilitch, General Manager Holland; to the team captain, Steve Yzerman, and all the Red Wings; Congressmen Bonior, Dingell, Knollenberg, Levin, Stupak; Mayor Archer and other mayors from Michigan who are here with us today: Welcome back to the White House.

You know, this is becoming such a regular thing—from time to time, we have State days at the White House. We'll have a Maryland Day, and bring in people from all over Maryland, and let them meet members of the Cabinet and talk about issues affecting the State. This is becoming so regular, we should just have Michigan Day at the White House when the Red Wings come.

Vince Lombardi, who was a pretty good coach himself, once said that "excellence is not a sometime thing." I think it's clear that, with your four-game sweep for a second straight Stanley Cup, that's what the Red Wings are living by.

I've always found the history of the Stanley Cup particularly interesting. It's the oldest trophy competition by professional athletes in North America; the only trophy which bears the names of individual players and coaches. And what I admire most is the tradition of the whole team sharing the Cup, each player getting to take it home to friends and family. I think it's a tradition that other sports ought to follow, because it recognizes that every person on a team makes a unique and enduring contribution.

The Red Wings overcame the Capitals—as I said, our hometown team, but we still are impressed with what you did—[laughter]—in four decisive games, with grit, determination and teamwork. The series will be remembered as a defensive triumph that spotlighted your goalie, Chris Osgood, who allowed seven whole goals. Amazing.

And of course, it will be remembered for the performance of your team captain. Steve, your teammates have said you have the heart of a champion and that, when the chips are